THE UNIVERSALIST Leader

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY FOUNDED BY HOSEA BALLOU IN 1819

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Continuing the CHRISTIAN LEADER and its predecessors (1819 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST and its predecessors (1827 to 1897), the GOSPEL BANNER (1835 to 1897), the UNIVERSALIST LEADER (1897 to 1926), and THE CHRISTIAN LEADER (1926 to 1953).

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The bond of fellowship in this church shall be a common purpose to do the will of God as Jesus revealed it and to co-operate in establishing the Kingdom for which he lived and died.
To that end we avow our faith in
God as Eternal and All-conquering Love,
The spiritual leadership of Jesus,
The supreme worth of every human personality,
The authority of truth known or to be known,
And in the power of men of good will and sacrificial spirit to overcome all evil and progressively establish the Kingdom of God.

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OUR CONTRIBUTORS

July, 1958 — No. 7

The cover pictures the Tufts University Crane School of Religion Class of 1958 with its Dean. Left to right, first row: David M. Blanchard, Marion W. Ross, Dean Benjamin B. Hersey, Bruce T. Wyman. Second row: left to right: William R. Moors, Bruno J. Visco, James W. Mott, Edwin A. Randle, Charles S. Stephen, Jr., Toshitsugu Arai.

Mervin C. Helfrich, minister of the Glen Ridge-East Orange, New Jersey, Universalist Church, contributes to the current rethinking of our basic positions in his essay **A Dynamic for Universalism.**

Llewellyn Jones gives us his sixth in the series *Poets in Epitome* in the discussion of the work of **W. H. Auden.**

Henry B. Pommer, on his sabbatical year at Cambridge University, England, during the holidays, visited Albert Schweitzer College in Switzerland. His present **Letter from Britain** is an account of that visit and a discussion of the college, which should be read by all its American backers.

Helen M. Frazier, well known Universalist laywoman and occasional contributor to these columns, contributes not only material which is inspirational but also always useable in the individual's quest for the good life. Such is her present essay, **And That One Talent.**

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A Dynamic for Universalism?

Mervin C. Helfrich

Every dynamic is secured by those who hold it only at great cost. Are we willing to pay the price?

INCREASINGLY we Universalists are insisting upon a dynamic for our faith. Some impetus must be found, we are told, to instill drive and verve into our spiritual and intellectual life. Thus shall we be stirred toward ever greater accomplishments as religious individuals and as a denomination.

While couched in positive terms, this concern is actually negative in origin. For the search for a dynamic reveals certain hidden misgivings about ourselves and our power to extend the church. The very fact that we turn for strength toward some empowering force implies that we, in our present religious life, do not possess that force and do not count on our acting creatively without it. We rely not so much on ourselves as on the dynamic which is to prod us.

Since that dynamic is not now a part of our lives, we are engaged in nothing less than reaching beyond our own resources for help. But we make a mistake if we assume this means a search for God. For among the suggestions for a specific dynamic the concept of Deity is notably absent. There is a reason. Among us are those who believe religion to be a personal relation to a Supreme Being and who betray the opinion that faith is not faith without Him. Opposed to this notion are those who say religion is fundamentally a set of attitudes by which man approaches his natural environment, adding that in such a view the idea of God is not necessarily implied. Which means that denominationally speaking, God is not an object of devotion. He is an object of debate. This automatically rules out Deity as a rallying point for all Universalists, given the conditions we desire a dynamic to fulfill. For we ask that it create among our total membership love not argument. Should this seemingly place God in an awkward position, it should be remembered that God has occupied that situation often in religious history. Further, we should bear in mind that if God in our church-life proves awkward, it is we who make him so.

At any rate, the dynamics offered fall into two categories. The first is that of visions. We are asked to capture in our hearts the vision of one world (sometimes rendered One World) or the vision of a world with economic plenty in hopes that these tantalizing examples of the good may inspire us to greater action and devotion. The theory is that once a man beholds these noble dreams, he will be stirred overwhelmingly to strive sacrificially for their realization — through the church, of course, which promotes these hopes. The second type dynamic is suitably called an idea or intellectual concept, and it operates in the same manner as the vision. Present a man with a vital teaching, it is inferred, and he will respond vigorously to the preservation and promulgation of that truth. Those who prefer this latter intellectual approach, point to the concept of universal salvation which, when preached in the post-Revolutionary period of our nation, aroused the spirits of thousands, and laid the groundwork for the Universalist Church. Apparently this teaching today strikes little fire, for in its place are proposed the doctrine of the infinite worth of the personality, the principles of democracy, the supremacy (or unity) of truth.

There seems to be, however, some question as to whether or not these particular visions and teachings are at all adequate, for there are those who already doubt their ability to inspire a powerful spiritual life. Indeed, these skeptics point to our continuing search for a dynamic and conclude that those dynamics just

mentioned must be quite unsatisfactory — hence the continued search. The dedicated, of course, can reply that the conversion of our church populace to an idea and thus the accomplishment of the effect of that idea, is a slow process, and that we should not judge results until the process is completed. Which, may inspire critics to retort that the process is slow, indeed.

There is, to be exact, no way to tell just how adequate such proposed dynamics are or can be. Or rather there is no way to speak convincingly on the subject, for in such matters one must rely on general impressions of our denominational scene, and general impressions do not always carry weight, though they may be true enough. What we can do, though, is to examine the course each of these possible dynamics must run if it is to be anywhere near acceptable as an empowering force in Universalism.

There are three tests by which is determined the adequacy or suitability of an ideal or idea proposed as a dynamic. We demand, obviously enough, that it be true. A concept that strikes one as invalid or an aspiration deemed impossible has no value as a stimulant of the religious life. For let us not sell ourselves short. *We are people of conscience if we are anything.* We cannot preach to the world an idea unacceptable in our own hearts, which means it is quite unwise to become so enrapt with the publicity value of a dynamic, or its ability to attract others, or its ability to set us off as a chosen people, without first asking whether we believe it ourselves. Without belief there is for a church no genuine success.

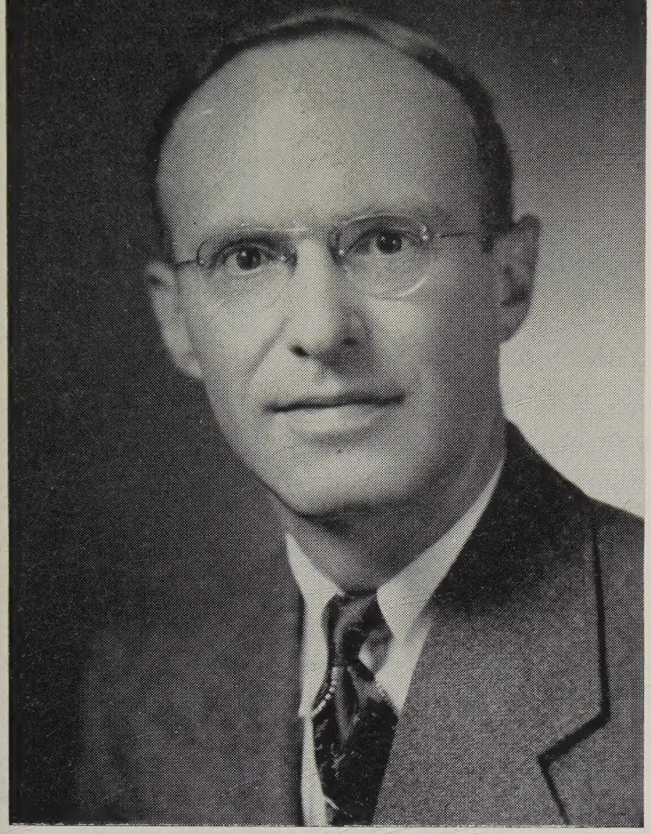
But belief in an idea or ideal is by no means enough. For belief without enthusiasm is just as fatal for a church as no belief at all. This is a distinction that needs to be made by those who claim that our church can extend its influence in the American and world religious scene simply by the adoption of a particular creed. For it is perfectly possible that a creed, while containing no untruths to be disbelieved, may stir the devotion of no one. This, indeed, has sometimes been shown by those who, attempting to remove all points of contention in our present thinking, have sought a common creed. The results have at times been strikingly common in both senses of the word.

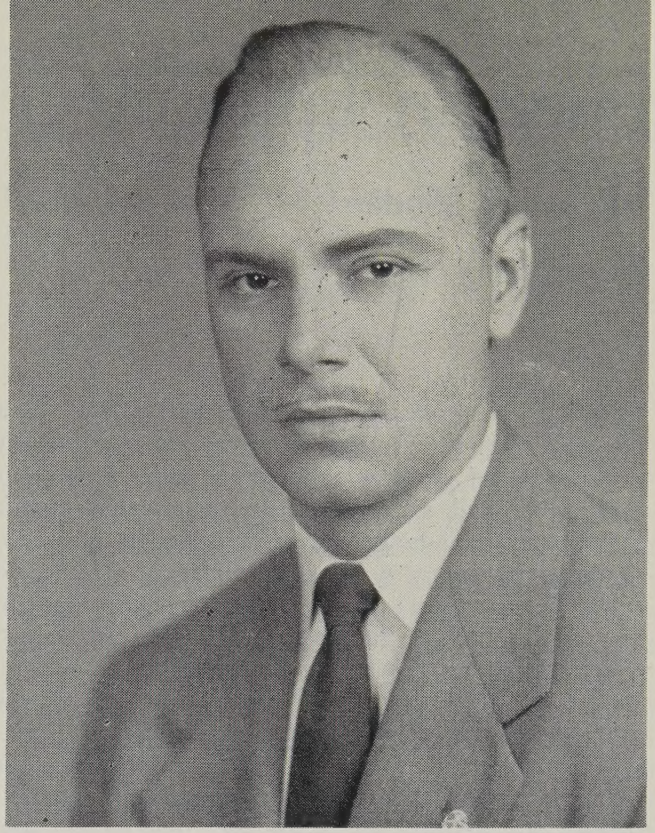
The most difficult test we impose, however, upon an idea or ideal slated for the exalted position of a dynamic, is one which relates to universality. We ask not only that this dynamic be believed, but that it be adopted by *everyone;* not only that it be received enthusiastically, but that it be accorded devotion by *all.* We desire this for practical reasons. For created here would be a much-hoped-for denominational solidarity. Not the fragile solidarity of those who disagree yet feel obliged to keep the peace, but the oneness of those who share deep convictions of heart and mind. Nor should we overlook the fact that a dynamic universally held, would prevent the loss of disaffected members upon entering a new era of Universalist history and thought.

Unfortunately, people for the most part seldom evince common reactions to an idea, especially if the idea is new. Anyone who has sat through debate on proposed bylaw changes at a National Convention can testify to that! It would be pointless to delineate here all possible reactions to a proposed dynamic. But whatever the dynamic, it is bound to meet in certain Universalists objections of a hearty sort, for one cannot always put forth a belief without creating strong-hearted unbelievers. This last point cannot be better illustrated than by the doctrine of universal salvation itself. For while that theological assertion, as we noted a moment ago, rallied many friends and thereby brought the Universalist Church into being, it also created many enemies, people quite sure the Universalists had a vested interest in the place they said they did not believe in!

All this is not to maintain that the perfect dynamic, that which arouses the total membership to positive, vigorous action, is completely out of the question. But it is to say that dedicated reliance on its advent is precarious, indeed. For the perfect dynamic in this sense has never yet appeared in man's history. True, one is astounded at the power and growth of such dynamics as the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, the enlightenment of Buddha, and the preachments of Mohammed. *There is a kind of magic in the ability of these spiritual invigorators to rally believers, but a limited magic when one considers the oppositions, misunderstanding, and discontent they also arouse in the hearts of non-believers.*

To look toward a dynamic, then, for power to achieve a greater church means almost certainly the creation, temporarily at least, of opposition, disagreement, and theological readjustments among us. This is not to predict a crisis that would splinter the church. It is only to say that progress through a specific dynamic has its price. Thus, Jesus, who brought a hope to mankind, also insisted that he had brought a sword, which means that those who desire to extend our church through the power of a specific faith or ideal but who at the same time refuse to create in our denomination the slightest trace of unhappiness or trouble, must find another way.





Colleges Honor Universalist Leaders

CARLETON MINER FISHER — Trained for the ministry at St. Lawrence University and its Theological School, he served Universalist churches in Maine and Massachusetts before being called to the pastorate of the Universalist Church in Buffalo, New York. Mindful that modern religion is validly concerned with the great problems of social change and reformation, and equally mindful that churchmen must shoulder responsibility in times of tragic human need, he received training for post-war rehabilitation work at the Pacific School of Religion. In 1945, he became the overseas representative of The Universalist Church of America. His distinguished work in Europe won him the respect and gratitude of the governments of the Netherlands and Hungary and official citations mark their esteem. Returning to America, he gave vigorous leadership to his denomination as Director of the Universalist Service Committee in further programs of social concern and church extension. He was chiefly responsible for the post-war reorganization of the Universalist Church of Japan.

Returning to the work of the pastorate in 1953, he was called to his present post as minister of the Universalist Church at Wausau, Wisconsin. In 1957, he received the highest honor his denomination could bestow when he was elected President of The Universalist Church of America.

He has been a fearless spokesman for justice, an advocate at the bar of mercy and compassion, a prophetic voice in behalf of One Humanity and a wise and understanding minister to those who look to him for spiritual support and guidance.

In recognition of his humanitarian achievements and his meritorious leadership in religion, St. Lawrence University is happy to bestow upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

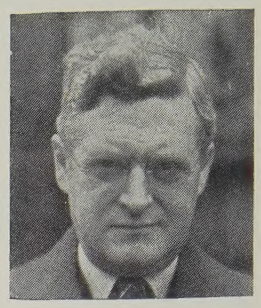
PHILIP RANDALL GILES, General Superintendent of The Universalist Church of America, graduate of the Crane Theological School of Tufts University, holder of various executive offices in the Universalist Church since 1953 and General Superintendent since January, 1957, member of the United States Army Air Force in the Pacific Theater during World War II and now Chaplain and Lieutenant Colonel in the Active Reserve of the Air Force, for the degree of Doctor of Divinity, **honoris causa.**

Graduate of Tufts who has gone on to the highest administrative post in The Universalist Church of America, the Church of the Founding Fathers of Tufts, we recognize the important role you play within the Liberal Church in America and express the pride of your **alma mater** in your achievements by conferring upon you the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Poets in Epitome

VI. W. H. Auden

Llewellyn Jones



THE three most obvious things to be said about W. H. Auden are that he is the most technically gifted poet of the day, apparently in command of every style and every verse technique; that in the realm of doctrine he has exposed himself to and been propelled by every wind from those of Marx and Freud in his youth, through general disillusionment and into orthodox Christianity — all before he had well reached middle age; and the third is that inspection of *The Collected Poetry of W. H. Auden* (Random House, 1945) witnesses a ruthless suppression of many of the earlier poems including the ambitious *The Orators.* This ruthless suppression is largely due presumably to the fact that Auden first wrote as a member of "the war generation" of English poets and since then, new occasions have been teaching new duties as well as new doctrines. There is another line of demarcation cutting across Auden's work, his migration to America, which took place some time before 1941. At any rate, by 1941, he was teaching English literature in Swarthmore College, by 1945 he was at Bryn Mawr, and it looked as if America had got a new poet in exchange for the T. S. Eliot we had lost — a fair enough exchange as both had become Christians.

It came to me then as a distinct surprise to see one day on the counter of one of the few remaining bookstores in Cambridge which still deal in literature, a pamphlet whose cover read: *Making, Knowing and Judging: An Inaugural Lecture Delivered before the University of Oxford on 11 June 1956,* by W. H. Auden. Mr. Auden had been appointed Professor of Poetry in Oxford, a post with a five-year tenure which has traditionally been reserved for poets and critics of the highest standing — Matthew Arnold, if I remember, was one. That means that Mr. Auden for all poetic, if not political purposes, has once more become an Englishman, and it also means that he has become institutionalized. One cannot help wondering if in his shorter span from poet of the left to Professor of Poetry in Oxford, he is not going to repeat the curve from the Wordsworth of the 1805 *Prelude* to the Wordsworth of the revision of that poem made in 1850. Nor do the contents of this inaugural lecture reassure us. As an inaugural, it is modest, witty and charming. But when a poet who must be familiar with I. A. Richards' distinction between prose or logical statements and "pseudo-statements," condemns a short, humorous poem of Yeats because he disagrees with a statement in it which he interprets as a universal, the statement to wit that scholars are bald-heads who can edit Catullus but cannot "cut up" as Catullus presumably did, one begins to wonder. What Yeats did was to describe a sort of sub-species within the genus of scholars, and we have all met them, and then to ask:

> "Lord, what would they say
> Did their Catullus walk that way?"

And Mr. Auden spends half a page in defending the editorial work of academic scholars. And I was a little aghast when Mr. Auden began to sum up his own theory of poetry and introduced it by citing Coleridge's theory of primary and secondary imagination and buttressing the argument by a quotation from *Witchcraft* by Charles Williams.

I have no objection to a poet being an orthodox Christian and two poets who rank very high indeed in my esteem are Roman Catholic Christians: Gerard Manley Hopkins and Alice Meynell. But usually, in Hopkins' case not always, their poetry springs from its own sources, even though it may use Christian imagery.

This may be said, of course, of very much of Mr. Auden's poetry. The opening poem, for instance, in the *Collected Poetry,* "Musée des Beaux Arts" is a "reading" of Brueghel's picture, "Icarus" which depicts that unfortunate innovator's fall into the sea, a picture reminding us, the poet says, that:

> "About suffering they were never wrong,
> The Old Masters; how well they understood
> Its human position; how it takes place
> While someone else is eating or opening a
> window or just walking dully along; . . ."

What the poem does is to pin down something which is far, far commoner than tragedy and far more horrifying — for tragedy has its dignity and its classic precedents. Over thirty years ago I read a Norwegian novel, *Chaff Before the Wind,* by Sigurd Christianson, explicitly developing the same thesis, but obviously it is one that does not lend itself, as tragedy does, to artistic treatment. It is not impossible that Mr. Auden places it in the forefront of his book as an example of what you get if you insist on "one world" and reject the supernatural theses of his other poems.

A poem beginning finely, and one of Auden's acclaimed triumphs, is hurt for me by the manner of its ending. It is the tribute, "At the Grave of Henry James." It begins with an extraordinary evocation of the snow-wreathed grave with its white marble headstone:

> "The snow, less intransigeant than their marble,
> Has left the defence of whiteness to these tombs;
> For all the pools at my feet
> Accommodate blue now, and echo such clouds as occur
> To the sky, and whatever bird or mourner the passing
> Moment remarks they repeat. . . ."

Then the circling attention gradually settles down upon the achievement of the great author:

> "O stern proconsul of intractable provinces"

— a shining example of what Auden can do in a single line and a notable piece of criticism, being in fact a rebuke to the majority of those hasty critics who have misunderstood Henry James' works and have misinterpreted them in ambitious studies. The "difficult provinces" which only James' great technical "sternness" enabled him to subdue were in the moral realm, where these critics saw only the comedian's realm of manners.

James himself complained of his audience's frequent inability to follow him into the moral realm. But he never did so in quite the terms which Mr. Auden is found using toward the end of this poem. Not content with rendering unto James the things which are James', he invokes the "resentful muttering Mass" which has a "ruminant hatred of all which cannot be simplified . . ." and which likes to "vilify the landscape of Distinction" — but he has invoked a bogey-man, for James himself even when he complained of stupidity never talked in terms which equated ignorance with malignity. And the poem ends with Auden asking the soul of James to pray for him and all writers — for there is little enough time for them to recognize "Him . . . the author and giver of all good things." A curious request when we remember that Henry James never laid claim to access to the Almighty's ear.

In a word, Auden is a great twentieth-century poet entangled in a fourteenth-century theology.

UNANIMOUS CHOICE AS MINISTER OF LYNN CHURCH — Dr. Fenwick L. Leavitt, Jr., minister of the Universalist Church of the Restoration, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has accepted a unanimous call to become the minister of the First Universalist Church, Lynn, Massachusetts. Dr. Leavitt, who succeeds Dr. William Wallace Rose, retired, will take up his new duties on August 1. Dr. Leavitt, the son of a Universalist minister, has previously served churches in Brookline, Massachusetts, Middletown, New York, and Barre, Vermont, before going to Philadelphia. Dr. and Mrs. Leavitt have two daughters, Joan and Meredith.

Letter from Britain V

Henry F. Pommer

I HAVE had a great affection and admiration for Professor and Mrs. Robert Tapp since I met them in 1956 at the Theological School of St. Lawrence University. Consequently I was delighted to be able to visit them at Albert Schweitzer College in Churwalden, Switzerland, where they have spent this entire academic year. During the third term of the year they are the only full-time members of the staff giving instruction in any subject other than languages, so their presence is of the utmost importance to the College. Their year has been difficult in many ways, and it is gratifying that they look forward with enthusiasm to returning to the Theological School with its expanded staff, improved salary scale, and growing student body.

Albert Schweitzer College began its first winter courses in October, 1955, with excellent statements of purpose and ideals. Each year has shown improvements in the reconditioned hotel which is the College's only building, and increases in the student body, with twenty-three enrolled during the current trimester.

A visit of only thirty-six hours was insufficient for learning at firsthand all problems which the school faces, and they appear to be numerous and serious. But perhaps a relative outsider can say something useful about one problem, a problem which should, with several others, be carefully examined by Americans of liberal religion who are asked to support the College. This is the problem of the College's location. Churwalden is a tiny village, seven steep and winding miles from Chur (or Coire), which has a population of about eighteen thousand. This international College is at Churwalden because the man who first proposed its founding and who now serves as its director, Hans Casparis, is a teacher in the cantonal secondary school at Chur, and because a former hotel at Churwalden could be bought inexpensively. A third reason which might be offered is that the canton of which Chur is the capital is the center of religious liberalism in Switzerland.

If, however, Albert Schweitzer College is to become a first-rate educational institution, its backers ought to think seriously about its location before more money is invested in the present site. For example, it could be well argued that the College ought to be located within fifteen to thirty minutes travel of a university city like Zurich, which is eighty miles from Churwalden — a two and a half hour drive even if the roads are clear. The advantages of such a change would include access to an adequate library, fuller opportunities to use visiting lecturers, and easy access to first-rate music and other artistic activities.

There is, of course, something to be said for a college's being located in a small community rather than in the midst of a city, but excessive isolation deprives students of experiences which can form a valuable enrichment of education. There is also something to be said for a college being near good skiing slopes, but Albert Schweitzer College may be too close to them because of the temptations they offer. Indeed, one question which those responsible for the College must decide is what kind of educational institution they wish to foster. A staff, site, and building which might be adequate for summer courses, might be inadequate for instruction during a nine-months academic year at a level which Americans associate with the word *college*.

I CALLED ON MRS. E. this afternoon, and as she greeted me I remarked on the beauty of the day. The air was warm and carried the scent of bracken from across the narrow valley whose hills rose softly into blue sky. I would have liked to have stood on her hillside doorstep to enjoy the lovely prospect with her. Instead she bustled me indoors, saying, "Come in Mr. S., and I'll tell you how when we first moved here it rained every day for three weeks. I said I'd never settle but I have." She rattled on. "And where do you think we've booked for our holidays, Mr. S.? At M. and we'll be able to go and hear Mr. R. who used to be here when I was young." She had much more to tell me, of the past and of the future, and as I paused by her gate to savour once more the exquisite present moment, I felt sad that for so many people like Mrs. E. life is no more than a ribbon tying the past to the future. . . .

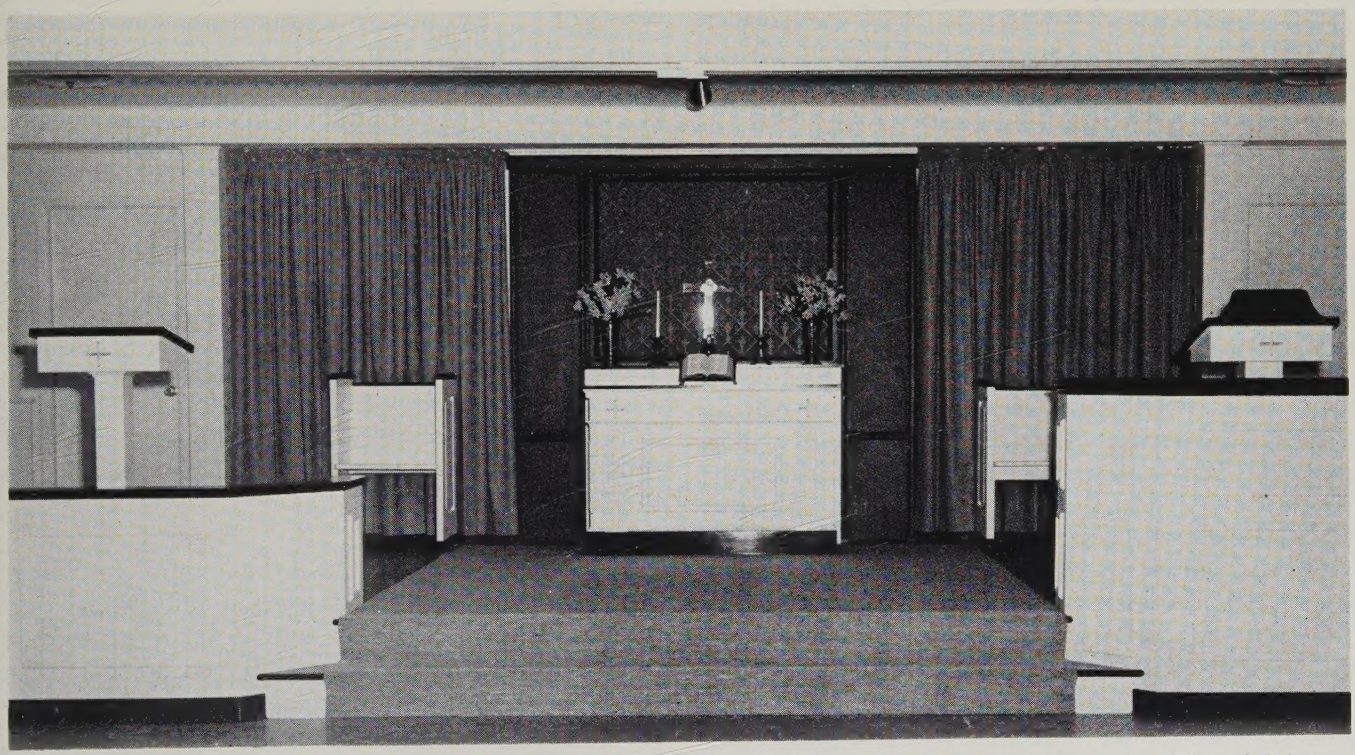
When I arrived at the Sunday School committee this evening, Mrs. M. was defending her last week's absence to our quiet Miss Y. "I just didn't feel like coming," Mrs. M. was saying. "I don't get any inspiration out of a service unless I am in the mood." Miss Y. heard her out, as she always does, and merely remarked, "I always try to come, however I feel." Engaged in hanging up my coat, I glanced at the serene light of Miss Y.'s grey eyes. I wondered how long it will take Mrs. M. to realize that the secret of inspiration is regularity. — SIMPLICITAS in *The Inquirer*

TO SERVE IN GERMANY AGAIN — Dr. and Mrs. Gustav Ulrich sailed for Germany June 7 to work for the Universalist Service Committee in West Berlin. The couple will work with youth refugees between the ages of fourteen and nineteen years at the Berlin-Kladow Refugee Center, sponsored by the Arbeiterwohlfahrt. In 1949, Dr. Ulrich established the "model" home at Verden for youth refugees from eleven nations under the sponsorship of the Universalist and Unitarian Service Committees.

The Ulrichs will work for the Universalist Committee for a period of five to ten months remaining flexible as to work location in the event the refugee situation becomes more acute elsewhere.

The Committee is once again sending eight work campers to the youth home at Druhwald who will be under the direction of Richard Gilbert, Briston, New York, a graduate student for the Universalist ministry at St. Lawrence. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Leppmann will lead fourteen campers to two locations in South German refugee centers. At the Ulm refugee center, seven campers will work with the Arbeiterwohlfahrt, "House of Youth," and at the Nordalb Center seven campers will conduct a day camp program for child refugees from Poland.

All of the leaders, the Ulrichs, Richard Gilbert and Mr. and Mrs. Peter Leppmann have donated their services to the projects listed.



CHANCEL OF CUMBERLAND (R. I.) CHAPEL — Members of the Four Corners Community Chapel (Universalist) dedicated their new addition and new organ May 4 through 11. The first stage is a building parallel to the present community hall and ties into its west end. The superstructure of the new 33- by 80-feet Colonial-design chapel will be built in the second phase, to begin as soon as funds are available. The new pipe organ was given to the chapel by Mrs. Arthur Straight in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Collier.

The welcome and greetings from the national organization were given by Dr. Philip Randall Giles.

A Religious Year Has Twelve Months

"LIBERALS close up their churches and take a vacation from religious work in the summer, don't they?" So an orthodox friend suggested to us in *gentle* critical mood. "Wrong on both points," we replied. Many hundreds of Universalists are a full twelve-month fellowship of learners in religion. These folk learn *by doing in fellowship.* From the tidemarks at Ferry Beach, Maine, and Murray Grove, New Jersey, through the Adirondack retreat of New York State, to Lake Michigan's shore and on across to southern California, this month and next month, these hundreds of Universalists will be giving up hours and days of vacation to attend intensive institutes of learning. At such institutes the students fit themselves to become better church school teachers, more effective leaders of men and women in church work, and more efficient trustees of church institutions.

To forms of learning through service go adults and youth to represent Universalism each summer both at home and abroad. Such projects like that of Dr. and Mrs. Ulrich in Germany and the youth workcamps, announced in this number, are also Universalists at work expressing their concern for persons.

In study, work, and worship many Universalists are active in summer as well as spring and fall and winter. With the passage of the years, more and more Universalist churches are being kept open all year for at least one service of worship during the summer months. This is all to the good as long as it does not mean over-working a tired but conscientious minister.

No, Universalists do not forget about their religion or cease from its practice during the summer months as we most definitely told our Orthodox friend. Underneath our reply, however, was a lurking silent uneasiness. Even the hundreds of Universalists we cited above are a small minority. Do we who do not or cannot attend institutes or workcamps practice our religion during the vacation months? Only the several thousand "wes" that constitute the majority of us can answer that question. There are ways to answer it positively and affirmatively though they may not ever become visible evidence to our outside critics. "We" who remain at home can make it possible for idealistic youngsters to become members of workcamp projects by establishing scholarships for these workcamps in our local churches. Too late this year? Yes, but it is in good time for next summer season. We who remain at home can also establish scholarships for representatives from our local churches to attend *educational institutes* in our area. Too late this year? Aye, but there are more years ahead, and more and greater needs in those years for our growing Universalist fellowship.

Do Universalist liberals close up religious shop during the summer months and take irresponsible religious vacations? Hundreds of us don't loaf spiritually through the sunny days. Thousands more of us . . . . ? "By their fruits shall men know them". This scribe believes that the fruits of Universalist religious fellowship are getting better and growing larger each year. But our brothers' tragic needs at home and abroad leave no time nor occasion for prideful boasting.

Then, keep up the Advance of Universalism to meet the needs of one humanity.

THE SCRATCH PAD

July comes round again bringing Independence Day, a great historic holiday for all Americans. The problems and needs of 1958 should impress upon all Americans our *daily* need for *interdependence* in the Western world.

* * *

Universalists motoring about the country on summer trips look for their own churches in cities where they spend Sundays. Keep your bulletin board up to date for out of town Universalists. If you are part of a summer community program of worship services give full data of place and time on your bulletin board.

* * *

Mid July brings the annual pilgrimage to the home of Hosea Ballou. Specifically the occasion will be Sunday, July 13, with a memorial service in the church at Richmond, New Hampshire, at four in the afternoon and later a visit to the Ballou homestead.

And That One Talent

Helen M. Frazier

"Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed:
"And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth:"
(Matt. 25:24-25)
"And that one talent which is death to hide . . ." *(Milton)*

IN his last letter to the Church of the Larger Fellowship, Mr. Giles suggested that we pause to consider our life with others. A wise suggestion!

Included in the mailing was a sermon by the Rev. Carleton M. Fisher, President of The Universalist Church of America. This is such a fine sermon. I wish copies could reach everyone, everywhere.

In conclusion, Mr. Fisher said: "We need to recognize the talents we have — the usefulness of the work we do — we need to see wherein all that we are and do becomes meaningful in the divine economy. Yet more, we need to retain so long as we live, that unconscious dignity and eagerness with which the little child engages in the adventure of life."

Here is a message for all, but particularly the elderly and the handicapped, — any who are discouraged because they cannot serve as actively as previously.

Like so many others (active as well as inactive), I have been ashamed of being a "one talent man" and have tended to bury my talent saying, "What can I do with so little capital to start on?"

My point of view was changed recently by reading the little book *Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Bonhoeffer was a Lutheran pastor who died in a Nazi concentration camp. Although the author's theology was unpalatable to me, I found myself admiring the man himself, his sincerity and earnestness. Believing that whenever a man is earnestly seeking the Highest, some measure of truth will be revealed, it becomes the duty of the religious liberal to seek for Truth in all quarters. So in this little book, beneath the orthodoxy, there are many stimulating ideas, some of which are particularly pertinent to the religious liberal.

The chapter on "Ministry" (service to others) is most valuable. What is said under *Ministry of Helpfulness* is more the concern of active people but under the other headings are messages for everyone, especially the inactive.

Under the section entitled *Ministry of Listening* are these words: "Christians, especially ministers, so often think they must always contribute something when they are in the company of others, that this is the one service they have to render. They forget that listening can be a greater service than speaking. . . . But he who can no longer listen to his brother will soon be no longer listening to God either; he will be doing nothing but prattle in the presence of God, too. This is the beginning of the death of the spiritual life, and in the end, there is nothing left but spiritual chatter and clerical condescension arrayed in pious words. One who cannot listen long and patiently will presently be talking beside the point and be never really speaking to others, albeit he be not conscious of it. Anyone who thinks that his time is too valuable to spend keeping quiet will eventually have no time for God and his brother, but only for himself and for his own follies. . . . There is a kind of listening with half an ear that presumes already to know what the other person has to say. It is an impatient, inattentive listening, that despises the brother and is only waiting for a chance to speak and thus get rid of the other person. This is no fulfillment of our obligation."

Never again can I underrate the service of mere listening.

Along with the *Ministry of Listening* and the *Ministry of Helpfulness* go the *Ministry of Forbearing:* concerning which Bonhoeffer says: "The Christian must bear the burden of a brother. He must suffer and endure the brother. It is only when he is a burden that another person is really a brother and not merely an object to be manipulated. . . . It is the freedom of the other person that is a burden to the Christian. The other's freedom collides with his own autonomy, yet

he must recognize it. He could get rid of this burden by refusing the other person his freedom, by constraining him and thus doing violence to his personality, by stamping his own image upon him. The freedom of the other person includes all that we mean by a person's nature, individuality, endowment. It also includes his weaknesses and oddities, which are such a trial to our patience, everything that produces frictions, conflicts, and collisions among us. To bear the burden of the other person means involvement with the created reality of the other, to accept and affirm it, and in bearing with it, to break through to the point where we take joy in it."

Here, indeed, are words of wisdom for all who are involved in group living, and who is not! Whether it is in the relatively small and intimate family group or the church family, school and community groups, or life in an institution where many are living in too close proximity, the tensions and problems of group living make forbearance not only a worthy service, but a necessity for happy survival. How quickly world peace would become a reality if the people of the world would practice forbearance!

The sections on *The Ministry of Proclaiming* and *The Ministry of Authority* are, or should be, of especial interest to religious liberals although, not being evangelical, we would change the emphasis somewhat. It is in this area that individual Unitarians and Universalists most often miss the mark. Zealous to protect freedom of thought, they lean over backward, even to the point of declaring that a person has no right to "impose unsolicited religious ideas" on others. Laymen, who feel this way, shrug off any individual responsibility with a clear conscience and leave the proclaiming of their religious convictions to the pulpit and the denominational press.

There may be some who are kept from voicing their religious ideas by the feeling that they have no authority to speak for the denomination. It is true that in free churches, where there are many shades and varieties of opinion, it is difficult to speak for the whole group! Yet in such churches where every man is his own priest, any man has authority to speak *his own* interpretation of religion. Thus, in non-authoritarian churches, the question of who has authority to speak should not be of grave concern. If there is anyone who is bothered by the question of authority, let him ponder these words: "Jesus made authority in the fellowship dependent upon brotherly service. Genuine spiritual authority is to be found only where the ministry of hearing, helping, bearing, and proclaiming is carried out."

The two main reasons that the average layman is deterred from proclaiming his religion are: (1) he is not sure what he believes and (2) he is reluctant to speak of religion. To the average layman, "proclaiming religion" means shouting religion from the street corners and collaring everyone you meet to expound religion to him. Since these tactics are repugnant to most of us, we disclaim any responsibility for missionary service.

But by what right do we excuse ourselves so quickly from any responsibility to spread the religious truth that we cherish? We do not want to force our religious ideas on anyone, but if we have that which feeds and sustains us spiritually, are we not bound to offer to share it with a brother who is starving spiritually, even as we share the bread that nourishes physically? This sharing is what Pastor Bonhoeffer calls "proclaiming the Word" and he regards it as the crowning service we can render to our fellowman. Why should we neglect it?

Clearly there are two obligations that rest upon each of us: (1) To proclaim our religion through our daily living in such a way that others will ask:

What is this man's religion? What is it that makes him the kind of man he is?

Why is this woman able to be such a tower of strength to her family?

What makes this teen-ager able to handle the crises of youth with so much maturity and poise?

What is the storehouse from which this dear old lady draws to make her life so richly contented while so many elderly people sit wrapped in boredom and self-pity?

What gives this one or that one the courage and strength to bear pain, physical handicaps, bereavement and tragedy?

(2) The other obligation that we have is to know what we believe so that when called upon to do so, we can state our religious ideas clearly and with conviction.

Here then, is a challenge for a lifetime:

To cultivate the art of listening, *realizing it as a worthy service.*

To help others wherever and whenever the opportunity occurs, *not despising the smallest service when the ordinary channels of helpfulness are blocked.*

To try to practice forbearance every waking hour *realizing that this is the Golden Key to "peaceful coexistence."*

To proclaim religion in word and deed, thus fulfilling the commission of Jesus: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every living creature."

News of Churches and Church People

Officers, Ministers, Visiting Speakers at Maine State Universalist Convention.

THE MAINE UNIVERSALIST CONVENTION held at Oakland and Waterville on May 2 and 3 proved to be the largest and most successful for many years with nearly 137 delegates, ministers and officers, and many visitors from several churches in Maine.

The Association of Universalist Women of Maine opened its Convention with 125 women in attendance and Mrs. Robert Dick, first vice president of the National Association of Universalist Women as speaker. Officers elected were: President, Mrs. Douglas Robbins of Augusta; vice president, Mrs. Ralph Ingraham of Augusta; secretary, Mrs. Florence Whitman of Turner; financial secretary, Miss Hazel Smith of Bangor; and treasurer, Miss Cecilia Bradstreet of Bangor.

The Association of Universalist Men of Maine elected Harold C. Perham of West Paris as executive secretary of the organization and initiated plans for four regional suppers and meetings to be held during the winter season in the Cumberland-York district, the Oxford-Androscoggin district, the Kennebec-Knox district, and the Penobscot - Piscataquis - Aroostook district.

The Universalist Ministers' Association elected the Rev. Donald M. Hinckley of West Paris as president, the Rev. Earle W. Dolphin of Turner as secretary, the Rev. Charles Vickery of Livermore Falls as vice president, Southern area, and the Rev. Glen McKee of Guilford as vice president of the Northern area. They reported a busy and successful year of activity.

The afternoon session at the Oakland church included the Seminar on Religious Education by Alice Harrison of Boston, National Youth Director; the Clara Barton Tea; and the Workshop by Mrs. Herbert Cousins of Yarmouth.

At 6:30 p.m. the convention transferred to the Waterville Universalist-Unitarian Church for the banquet. The featured speaker was Prof. Gustave H. Todrank, Ph.D., Department of Philosophy and Religion at Colby. The program included Ernest C. Mariner, Dean of Colby College, who spoke on "Historical Vistas of Maine Universalism," and Dr. Philip R. Giles of Boston, General Superintendent of The Universalist Church of America, who spoke on "Universalist Advance."

The Saturday session of the convention dealt strictly with the business of the Universalist Church of Maine, which closed with a luncheon at the Waterville church and the featured speaker, the Rev. Albert F. Ziegler of

(Continued on Page 171)

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OBITUARY

MARY E. FRIEDRICH

Mary E. Friedrich died on May 17, 1958, at the Long Island College Hospital. Memorial services were conducted by the Rev. Cornelius Greenway, D.D., at the All Soul's Universalist Church in Brooklyn. Mrs. Friedrich had been active in the affairs of our denomination for many years, was honorary president, a trustee and former president of the Chapin Home for the Aged in Jamaica, L. I. She was also a past president and treasurer of the Women's Alliance of Universalist Women in the Metropolitan District, and a trustee of the National Association of Universalist Women, the Murray Grove Association and the Universalist Church of Brooklyn.

CALIFORNIA AWARD TO DR. BLAUVELT

Nine members of the Universalist Community Fellowship of the Harbor Area attended the California State Convention of Universalist Churches at Santa Paula on May 16 and 17. From Costa Mesa were Mr. and Mrs. Holbrook Mulford and Luba Gorbunoff; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Perrin and Mrs. Henry Hofmann, Jr., from Newport Beach; Dr. Charles Clare Blauvelt, Corona del Mar; Mrs. Alma Morris from Santa Ana and Mary Boller, Long Beach.

Coming as a complete surprise to the recipient as well as the members was the award of a silver flower bowl given to Dr. Blauvelt as the person who had made the most significant contribution to Universalism in California during the past year. This is to be an annual award for leadership in the field of churchmanship by the Convention board.

Richard Mulford, son of the Holbrook Mulfords, was re-elected president of the Convention for 1958-1959.

Besides routine business of the Convention, the program presented lectures, panels and discussions on the subject: *Man at Mid-20th Century.* Outstanding men in the field of science and religion were heard including two clinical psychologists, an anthropologist, a geologist, director of the Ventura County Child Welfare Department and several clergymen.

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On August 3, 11:00 a.m., the United Universalist and Unitarian Church of Mukwonago, Wis., will again be hosts to friends of liberal religion at their annual Midsummer Festival for Religious Liberals. Friends from near and far are invited for this semi-picnic occasion thus given the opportunity to meet religious liberals from other churches. After the service, for which we will have an outside speaker, the ladies of the congregation will serve lunch without charge to all who attend the service and wish to remain.

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INSTALLATION

ALAN FREDERICK SAWYER, JR., was ordained to the Universalist ministry in The First Universalist Church of Girard, Penn., May 4, 1958.

The service was opened by Rabbi Randall M. Falk. Greetings and introductions of guests were brought by Mr. John S. Shattuck, moderator of the congregation.

The Ordination Sermon was preached by Rev. Philip Randall Giles, General Superintendent of The Universalist Church of America. Dr. Donald K. Evans, Superintendent of Universalist Churches in Ohio, led in the Act of Ordination.

The closing words were spoken by the Rev. Alan Frederick Sawyer, Jr.

CONNECTICUT WOMAN AWARDED FOREIGN POLICY SCHOLARSHIP

Priscilla Gardner, wife of the Rev. William E. Gardner, minister of the Universalist Church in Meriden, Connecticut, was recently chosen as one of six Connecticut women to be granted an Auerback Foundation scholarship to attend the Colgate Foreign Policy Conference at Hamilton, N. Y., this month.

Mrs. Gardner, who has long taken an active interest in public affairs generally and in particular foreign affairs, is the second vice-president of the Connecticut Division of the American Association of University Women. She is also a board member of the Young Women's Christian Association and on the state committee of the Association for Mental Health.

Maine Convention

(Continued from Page 169)

Providence, who spoke on "Universalism, the Whole Christian Gospel." Mr. Ziegler was introduced by Dr. Milton M. McGorrill of Bangor, Superintendent of the Universalist Church of Maine, as "an outstanding interpreter of Universalism." Author of several books and pamphlets on the subject of Universalism and re-appreciation of Universalism, Mr. Ziegler gave an inspiring address on Biblical growth in religious thinking and the whole Christian Gospel.

President Andrew Snyder presented a gift to the retiring secretary, James E. Philoon of Auburn "for this twelve years of devoted service to the cause of Universalism." Dr. McGorrill introduced the new Director of The Unified Appeal of The Universalist Church of America, Mr. L. G. Dixon, Boston.

The Convention closed with communion service at the Waterville church.

The newly elected officers were: President, Andrew Snyder, Randolph; vice president, Henry Fournier, Livermore Falls; secretary, Mrs. Allison Tucker, Rumford; treasurer, Mrs. Helen Wood, Augusta.

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NOTICES

FERRY BEACH PARK ASSOCIATION LADIES' AID

The Annual Meeting of the Ferry Beach Park Association Ladies' Aid will be held in the Quillen Lobby, Saco, Maine, at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 6, 1958. Annual reports will be read, election of officers will take place, and any other business that may properly come before the meeting will be considered and acted upon.

— AGNES E. PETERSON,
Recording Secretary

CALIFORNIA FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Notice is hereby given of the examination of the Rev. Carl York Smith as to his "fitness and purpose for ordination to the Universalist ministry" on Saturday, June 28.

At a meeting of the California Fellowship Committee, we voted to renew the license of Paul Sawyer for another year (May 17, 1958).

— FRED A. LESHANE, *Chairman*
California Fellowship Committee

ROBINSON TO RETIRE

Professor Elmo A. Robinson will retire from his position as head of the Philosophy Department at San Jose State College, San Jose, California, and will be succeeded by Professor Frederick Dommeyer of St. Lawrence University. Professor Robinson joined the staff at San Jose in 1928 after Universalist pastorates in New York, Indiana, and Ohio, and a Unitarian pastorate in California.

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